



**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 24: Technical Assistance Programme**

**PACIFIC REGION UPDATE - THE PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES  
(PSIDS)**

(Presented by Samoa, co-sponsored by Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO))

**REVISION NO. 1**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress in the Pacific in regarding the 2019 ICAO Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) feasibility study's 30 recommendations. The 'Port Moresby Declaration of Aviation Safety and Security' and the associated Ministerial Statement broadly endorsed the key outcomes as they relate to recommendations of the (PSIDS) Aviation Needs Analysis.

At the Pacific Regional Aviation Ministers' Meeting in June 2022 Ministers noted significant progress in several areas which address the substance of the PSIDS study. Without specifically addressing individual PSIDS recommendations, since 2019 PASO (Pacific Aviation Safety Office) and Pacific States have made major progress towards achieving the key outcomes sought by the study.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the content of this paper and the key actions taken by the Regional Aviation Ministers;
- b) note the challenges for the Pacific Island States from COVID-19 in maintaining and improving aviation standards, including implementation the recommendations of the PSIDS study; and
- c) agree that ICAO provide sufficient resources to the APAC Regional Office to support not only the PSIDS recommendations but more generally assist Pacific Island States in improving aviation standards as part of the recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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| <i>Strategic Objectives:</i>   | This working paper relates to Strategic Objectives of Aviation Safety and Economic Development. |
| <i>Financial implications:</i> | None  |
| <i>References:</i>             |   |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The PSIDS feasibility study was conducted by ICAO from March to September 2019. The study resulted in a report with 30 recommendations of which five were directed at ICAO for consideration, resourcing and action. A further 10 recommendations were for the consideration of ICAO in relation with assistance donors, training institutions and multilateral development banks.

1.2 The Study report also produced 14 recommendations for the consideration of the Pacific Island States and one recommendation for the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The PSIDS recommendations took a holistic approach in the development and implementation of a 'Pacific aviation roadmap' to achieve effective, sustainable and resilient aviation regulatory oversight in the Region

2.2 The Study identified that direct support to the State's regulatory oversight tasks should be achieved through the creation and operation of an enhanced Regional Safety Oversight Organisation (RSOO). The Study also recommended that ICAO establish a 'PSIDS Liaison Officer' position to facilitate support to the PSIDS and improve their communication and coordination in a more effective, efficient and timely manner to help States with their ICAO compliance obligations. This position has recently been advertised again.

2.3 The recommendation to establish an enhanced RSOO is a significant organisational change expected from the PSIDS. Equally significant is the recommendation for a 'Revised Treaty'. PSIDS proposes to involve the Pacific Island Forum Members in a collaborative manner to revise the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety and Security Treaty (PICASST) and invite all the Pacific States to enter into the Treaty.

2.4 These strategically important recommendations by the Study received due attention during the proceedings of the 1<sup>st</sup> Pacific Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting (RAMM1) convened virtually in June 2021 (hosted by the Government of Papua New Guinea).

2.5 The RAMM was the first such high-level regional aviation meeting since the initiation of the PICASST in 2004. RAMM1 provided a unique opportunity for regional collaboration and received high level political support for harmonisation and cooperation for Pacific regional aviation safety, security and recovery.

2.6 The revision of the PICASST has progressed through consultation with State Officials, and a Regional Aviation Workshop in April 2022. A revised version of the Treaty text was presented to and endorsed by Pacific Aviation Ministers at the 2nd Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting (RAMM2) in June 2022.

2.7 The assessment of an Enhanced Regional Organization (RSOO), including reviewing available information on PASO as a RSOO and establishing a detail of financial options is also in progress. Aviation Officials have considered the funding model and have agreed that the model requires further discussions to ensure that there is a clear understanding on how the funding model will support the new strategic direction as articulated in the Pacific Regional Strategy...

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Even before the 2019 PSIDS study there was already momentum in train to strengthen PASO and States' regulatory oversight capability, capacity and effectiveness. It must be noted also that PSIDS recommendation was directed towards PASO and States who were without any resources.

3.2 PASO and the Pacific States must be credited for the progress made in addressing key recommendations in PSIDS report despite the resource constraints and challenges of COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to present ongoing challenges for PSIDS to maintain and improve aviation standards.

3.3 It is critical that ICAO provides sufficient resources to the APAC Regional Office to support not only the PSIDS recommendations but the commitments in the Port Moresby Declaration and the 2021 Regional Ministerial Statements. These statements are a key aspect of the regional and individual States' response to the ICAO PSIDS Needs Analysis Study.

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